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Viewing cable 05ASUNCION1435, PARAGUAY AND COLOMBIA DISCUSS COUNTER-DRUG ISSUES

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cable's unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#05ASUNCION1435**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
05ASUNCION1435	2005-11-22 13:39	2011-08-30 01:44	SECRET	Embassy Asuncion

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.semana.com/wikileaks/Seccion/168.aspx>

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

```
id: 45823
date: 11/22/2005 13:39
refid: 05ASUNCION1435
origin: Embassy Asuncion
classification: SECRET
destination: 05ASUNCION1119|05ASUNCION403|05ASUNCION596
header:
```

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

----- header ends -----

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 ASUNCION 001435

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA, INL, S/CT
STATE PASS TO USAID LAC/AA
NSC FOR SUE CRONIN
SOUTHCOM FOR POLAD BARBARA MOORE
JOINT STAFF FOR J5 LTC SCOTT DAVIS
NAIROBI FOR MICHAEL FITZPATRICK

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/16/2015
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [PTER](#) [MARR](#) [SNAR](#) [PA](#) [CO](#)
SUBJECT: PARAGUAY AND COLOMBIA DISCUSS COUNTER-DRUG ISSUES
AND ESTABLISH BILATERAL COMMISSION

REF: A. ASUNCION 1119
1B. ASUNCION 596
1C. ASUNCION 403

Classified By: PolOff Mark A. Stamilio, reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

1. (C) Summary: An official Colombian counter-drug (CD) delegation traveled to Asuncion November 2-4 to hold bilateral CD discussions with the GOP. As a result of those discussions, the GOP and GOC established a bilateral, interagency CD commission and three working groups. Upon their arrival, the GOC delegation first met with US Embassy representatives for a frank discussion of the GOP's CD capabilities and level of commitment. During the two days that followed, the delegation met with members of the

National Anti-Narcotics Directorate (SENAD), former Attorney General, now Presidential National Security Advisor, Oscar Latorre, and the military services' Deputy Directors of Intelligence. The GOC delegation left pleased with the formation of the bilateral commission and working groups, but somewhat disappointed with substantive discussions on CD cooperation. End Summary.

12. (U) An official Colombian counter-drug (CD) delegation traveled to Asuncion November 2-4 to hold bilateral CD discussions with the GOP. The delegation visited under the auspices of continuing discussions of bilateral security cooperation that began in the wake of the Cecilia Cubas kidnap/murder (refs B and C). The GOC delegation comprised the following military and police officials:

- General Luis Paredes, Commander of the Colombian Army's Special CD Brigade
- Colonel Oscar Artehortua, the Colombian National Police officer in charge of CD operations in Colombia's northern zone
- Lieutenant Colonel Juan Carlos Rico, the Colombian Army's Deputy Director of Intelligence
- Major Edwin Reyes, Director of the Colombian Air Force's Drug Interdiction Unit

13. (U) As a result of those discussions, the GOP and GOC established a bilateral, interagency CD commission and three working groups. The bilateral commission fulfills a requirement established in an accord the two countries signed in 1997. The commission comprises representatives from the two countries' law enforcement communities, public security agencies, and health and education officials, among others. The three working groups will focus on the following:

- reducing the supply of illicit drugs, fighting organized/transnational crime, urban and rural CD operations, and the identification and destruction of drug labs
- demand reduction (primarily through education programs in schools)
- combating money laundering and related crimes

14. (C) At the GOC's request, the delegation met with representatives from the Embassy's POL section, DEA, ORA, and DAO prior to meeting with the GOP. EmbOffs provided the delegation a frank assessment of the political situation in Paraguay and the GOP's CD capabilities and level of commitment in the war on drugs. EmbOffs highlighted SENAD and others within the GOP who have proven to be reliable interlocutors, but stressed the debilitating effects of the country's pervasive corruption. The delegation appeared somewhat surprised to learn of the degree and extent of that corruption.

15. (C) Comment: The delegation noted that FARC activity within Paraguayan territory is a matter of significant concern to the GOC. Colombian Ambassador Bernal, on the other hand, has repeatedly downplayed FARC activity in Paraguay, for example by complaining about Embassy MIST radio advertisements that begin, "The FARC is in Paraguay, the FARC is in Paraguay!" The fact that Bernal and the delegation from Bogota are at odds on this matter raises questions about his support for the Uribe administration's policy on the matter. Colombian Political Counselor Raul Sanchez confided in PolOff on 11/15 that he has advised Bernal to avoid appearing to differ with GOC policy on this and other matters, but that Bernal has resisted. End Comment.

16. (C) The GOC delegation met with SENAD to discuss CD cooperation, but neither side felt that the meeting was productive. According to Sanchez, SENAD was unprepared for substantive discussions. Sanchez also complained that SENAD Director Hugo Ibarra did not attend the meeting. According to SENAD, they found out about the meeting at the last minute from the MFA and Vice President's office, and therefore did not have time to prepare for it. SENAD, in turn, complained to DEA that the GOC delegation did not offer substantive recommendations during the meeting.

17. (C) The GOC delegation also met with former Attorney Latorre and the military services' Deputy Directors of Intelligence, to discuss intelligence capabilities. According to Sanchez, the GOC views Latorre as their most reliable interlocutor with respect to bilateral security cooperation. Sanchez told PolOff on 11/15 that the GOC is underwhelmed with the cooperation they have gotten from current Attorney General Ruben Candia, and that the GOC plans to invite Latorre to Bogota for two weeks to learn more about Colombia's Administrative Security Department (DAS), National Customs and Tax Directorate (DIAN), and other aspects of the Colombia's national security apparatus.

18. (C) Comment: Latorre is battling cancer, and it remains unclear what roles and responsibilities will fall within his newly created portfolio as National Security Advisor. Latorre built a solid relationship with the Colombians during the Cubas investigation.

9. (S) Comment continued: Candia and Latorre are at odds with each other. When Latorre stepped down as Attorney General, he took with him all of the electronic listening equipment the Attorney General's Office (Fiscalia) had obtained from third-country governments. Also, upon taking office, Candia tried to fire Javier Cazal, the head of the Fiscalia's Judicial Investigations Unit and a personal friend of Latorre (ref A), for hoarding information. Ultimately, Cazal resigned, and went to work for Latorre in his new capacity as National Security Advisor. Cazal was a subject in the investigation of the alleged torture of Juan Arrom and Anuncio Marti, the suspected masterminds of the 2001 kidnapping of Maria Edith Bordon de Debernardi. Latorre's last official act as Attorney General was to reassign two prosecutors who reportedly kept Cazal on the sidelines during the investigation of the 2004 kidnapping of Cecilia Cubas, which was perpetrated by a radical faction of Arrom and Marti's leftist Free Fatherland Party (Partido Patria Libre, or PPL).

10. (S) Comment continued: Sensitive reporting indicates Latorre failed to share with appropriate GOP law enforcement officials information that GOC sources passed to him regarding assistance the PPL received from the FARC in planning and executing the Cubas kidnapping. Additionally, Latorre, who is a lawyer by trade, recently affiliated himself with the law offices of Dionisia Martinez de Seidhom, in Ciudad del Este (CDE). Martinez's husband, Yahya Seidhom, has used his CDE businesses to funnel money to Hezbollah. While Latorre asserts that he merely intends to provide legal advice to CDE businesses, his association with Martinez is troubling, at best. End comment.
JOHNSON

=====CABLE ENDS=====